

A STUDENTS' BOOK
OF
ENGLISH POETRY

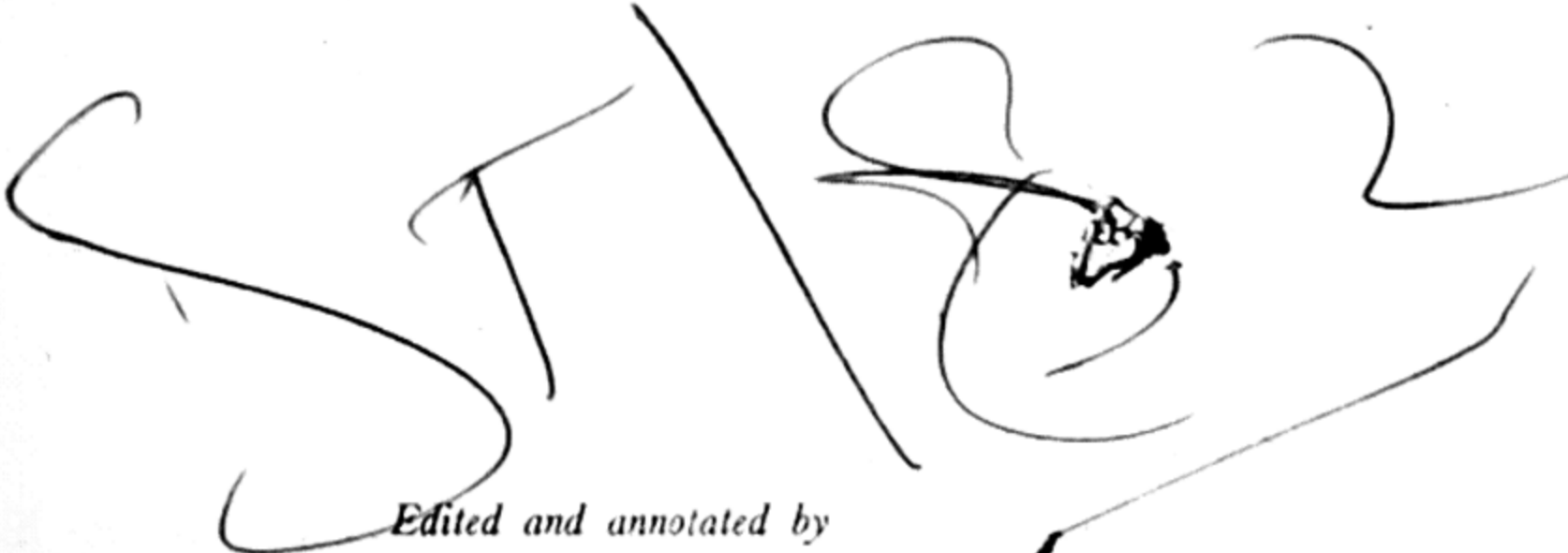
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Edited by

B. P. MATHUR, M.A.



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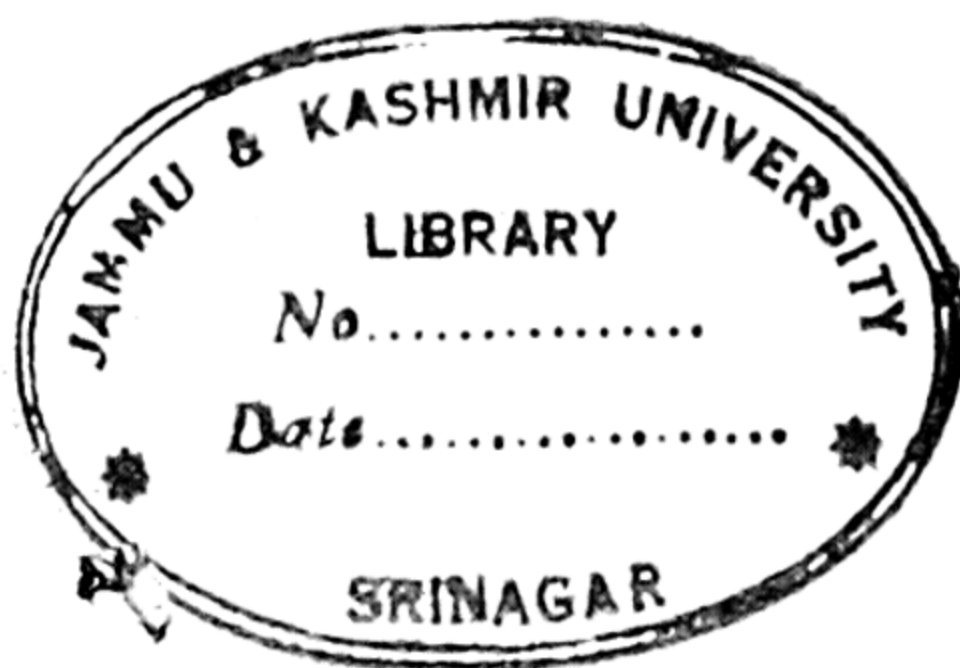
A STUDENTS' BOOK OF ENGLISH POETRY



Edited and annotated by

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PREFACE

The task of an anthologist is by no means an easy one. He has to consider the rival claims of many great poets whose eminence entitled them to a place in any good anthology and to omit whom appears almost an act of sacrilege. But considerations of space necessitate drastic elimination : the number has to be brought to a reasonably low figure, and this without the collection losing its representative character. Certain guiding principles have therefore to be kept in view.

In the present case the capacity of our young readers, mostly in their teens, to understand and appreciate the poems has been the most important criterion. Some poems, excellent in other respects, had thus to be excluded, being considered above their intellectual grasp. Then there were certain pieces which being traditionally indispensable in a school anthology, and which by reason of their antiquity and inherent charm are rightly regarded as "old favourites", pressed for inclusion : and so did a few others which are distinguished for beauty of form and sweetness of melody. A few 'didactic' poems have also been chosen, so as to satisfy the demand of those who seek—and rightly—'profit' in poetry.

Contemporary poetry should also, it was thought, find an adequate place in a modern selection. What taste, what standard can our recent flood of published English verse not satisfy ? And it would be unfair and improper not to introduce the young reader to a few typical poems of to-day. The moderns have,

therefore, been represented by Bridges, Kipling, Hardy, Massfield, Tagore, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and others. And here, incidentally, the present editor feels extremely gratified that this pursuit led him, during the last summer vacation, to delve freely into the works of many a modern poet—a pleasure which he would not have enjoyed otherwise and a thing which, in the midst of his more matter-of-fact duties, he would perhaps have gone on postponing indefinitely. The poems selected are simple in language and noble in conception, and should appeal to the finer sensibilities and æsthetic emotions of the young reader. A few poems with trains and aeroplanes as their themes have also been incorporated, thus establishing contact with the modern machine age.

In these cheerless days of strife and stress it also seemed proper to introduce a few simple humorous poems which would tickle the fancy of the young reader.

In conclusion, a word about the notes at the end. They have been kept brief and suggestive, so as to be helpful to the young student in his self-study. With a few introductory remarks by way of elucidation of the poet's meaning, each poem has just a few notes to explain the really difficult or uncommon words and expressions, the intention being to make the task of the average reader light and agreeable.

Dayalbagh, Agra.

August, 1942.

B. P. M.

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CONTENTS

| | | | PAGE |
|-----|--|------------------------|------|
| 1. | Lead, Kindly Light ! .. | Cardinal Newman .. | 1 |
| 2. | The Call to Evening Prayer .. | Mrs. Sarojini Naidu .. | 2 |
| 3. | The Spacious Firmament on High .. | J. Addison .. | 4 |
| 4. | A Psalm of Life | H. W. Longfellow .. | 5 |
| 5. | Abou Ben Adhem .. | Leigh Hunt .. | 7 |
| 6. | I Wander'd Lonely as a Cloud .. | William Wordsworth .. | 8 |
| 7. | The Man He Killed .. | Thomas Hardy .. | 9 |
| 8. | The Child's First Grief .. | F. Hemans .. | 10 |
| 9. | The Charge of the Light Brigade .. | Lord Tennyson .. | 12 |
| 10. | The Paper Boat | Rabindranath Tagore .. | 15 |
| 11. | The Toys | C. Patmore .. | 16 |
| 12. | The Children and Sir Nameless .. | Thomas Hardy .. | 18 |
| 13. | <i>Fortunatus Nimium</i> .. | Robert Bridges .. | 19 |
| 14. | As We Rush, As We Rush in the Train | James Thomson .. | 20 |
| 15. | The Taj Mahal | Mary Dobson .. | 21 |
| 16. | Roadways | John Masefield .. | 24 |
| 17. | The Train | Mary Coleridge .. | 25 |
| 18. | Up and Away | T. Mark .. | 26 |
| 19. | Home, Sweet Home .. | J. Howard Payne .. | 28 |
| 20. | The Slave's Dream .. | H. W. Longfellow .. | 29 |
| 21. | The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk | W. Cowper .. | 31 |

| | | | PAGE |
|-----|--|---------------------|------|
| 22. | The Miller of the Dee .. | C. Mackay .. | 33 |
| 23. | Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam | E. Fitzgerald .. | 34 |
| 24. | Lochinvar | Sir Walter Scott .. | 35 |
| 25. | The Brook | Lord Tennyson .. | 37 |
| 26. | Sweet Auburn (From "The Deserted Village") .. | Oliver Goldsmith .. | 40 |
| 27. | As Thro' the Land at Eve We Went | Lord Tennyson .. | 42 |
| 28. | Sad Story of a Motor Fan .. | H. A. Field .. | 42 |
| 29. | Six and Out | G. D. Martineau .. | 45 |
| 30. | And His Day's Work was Done | T. W. Connor .. | 46 |
| 31. | The Inchcape Rock .. | Robert Southey .. | 50 |
| 32. | Orpheus | W. Shakespeare .. | 53 |
| 33. | Breathes There the Man with Soul So Dead .. | Sir Walter Scott .. | 54 |
| 34. | "For all We Have and Are" | Rudyard Kipling .. | 55 |
| 35. | If— | Rudyard Kipling .. | 58 |
| | Notes | | 61 |

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT !

Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,

Lead Thou me on ;

The night is dark, and I am far from home :

Lead Thou me on.

Keep Thou my feet ; I do not ask to see

5

The distant scene, one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou

Shouldst lead me on ;

I loved to choose and see my path ; but now

Lead Thou me on,

10

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,

Pride ruled my will : remember not past years.

So long Thy power has blest me, sure it still

Will lead me on,

O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till

15

The night is gone,

And with the morn those angel faces smile

Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

Cardinal Newman (1801-90)



THE CALL TO EVENING PRAYER

Allah ho Akbar ! Allah ho Akbar !

From mosque and minar the muezzins are calling ;
Pour forth your praises, O Chosen of Islam ;
Swiftly the shadows of sunset are falling :

Allah ho Akbar ! Allah ho Akbar !

Ave Maria ! Ave Maria !

Devoutly the priests at the altars are singing ;
O ye who worship the Son of the Virgin,
Make your orisons, the vespers are ringing :

Ave Maria ! Ave Maria !

10

Ahura Mazda ! Ahura Mazda !

How the sonorous Avesta is flowing !
Ye, who to Flame and the light make obeisance.
Bend low where the quenchless blue torches are
glowing :

Ahura Mazda ! Ahura Mazda !

15

Naray'yana ! Naray'yana !

Hark to the ageless, divine invocation !
Lift up your hands, O ye children of Brahma.
Lift up your voices in rapt adoration.

Naray'yana ! Naray'yana !

20

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu (1879—1949)



THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT ON HIGH

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
Th' unwearied Sun, from day to day, 5
Does his Creator's power display ;
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous tale ; 10
And nightly to the listening Earth,
Repeats the story of her birth ;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll, 15
And spread the truth from pole to pole.
What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball ?

What though nor real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found ? 20
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice ;
For ever singing, as they shine,
' The Hand that made us is divine.'

J. Addison (1672-1719)



A PSALM OF LIFE

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
‘ Life is but an empty dream !’
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real ! Life is earnest ! 5
And the grave is not its goal ;
‘ Dust thou art, to dust returnest,’
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow, 10
Is our destined end or way ;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Finds us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating 15
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle !
Be a hero in the strife ! 20

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant !
Let the dead Past bury its dead !
Act, act in the living Present !
Heart within, and God o'erhead !

Lives of great men all remind us 25
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints, on the sands of time ;—

Footprints, that perhaps another, 30
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate ;
Still achieving, still pursuing, 35
Learn to labour and to wait.

H. W. Longfellow (1807-82)

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold : 5
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou ?'—The vision raised its head,
And with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answer'd, 'The names of those who love the Lord.' 10
'And is mine one ?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still ; and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'
The angel wrote and vanish'd. The next night 15
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had blest,
And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Leigh Hunt (1784-1859)

I WANDER'D LONELY AS A CLOUD

I wander'd lonely as a cloud,
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees, 5
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay : 10
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced ; but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee :
A poet could not but be gay, 15
In such a jocund company :
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood, 20
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude ;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

THE MAN HE KILLED

“ Had he and I but met
By some old ancient inn,
We should have sat us down to wet
Right many a nipperkin !

“ But ranged as infantry, 5
And staring face to face,
I shot at him as he at me,
And killed him in his place.

“ I shot him dead because—
Because he was my foe, 10
Just so : my foe of course he was ;
That's clear enough ; although

‘ He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,
Off-hand like—just as I
Was out of work—had sold his traps— 15
No other reason why.

“ Yes ; quaint and curious war is !
You shoot a fellow down
You'd treat if met where any bar is,
Or help to half-a-crown.” 20

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)



THE CHILD'S FIRST GRIEF

‘ Oh, call my brother back to me !

I cannot play alone ;

The summer comes with flowers and bee—

Where is my brother gone ?

‘ The butterfly is glancing bright

Across the sunbeam's track ;

I care not now to chase its flight—

Oh, call my brother back !

5

‘ The flowers run wild—the flowers we sowed
Around our garden tree ; 10
Our vine is drooping with its load—
Oh, call him back to me !’

‘ He would not hear thy voice, fair child !
He may not come to thee ;
The face that once like spring-time smiled 15
On earth no more thou’lt see.

‘ A rose’s brief bright life of joy,
Such unto him was given ;
Go—thou must play alone, my boy—
Thy brother is in heaven.’ 20

‘ And has he left the birds and flowers ;
And must I call in vain ?
And through the long, long summer hours,
Will he not come again ?

‘ And by the brook, and in the glade, 25
Are all our wanderings o’er ?
O, while my brother with me played,
Would I had loved him more !’

F. Hemans (1793-1835)



THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

I

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !' he said :
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

5

II

‘Forward, the Light Brigade !’
Was there a man dismayed ? 10
Not though the soldier knew
Some one had blundered.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why.
Theirs but to do and die. 15
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them 20
Volleyed and thundered ;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell, 25
Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while 30
All the world wondered :

Plunged in the battery smoke,
Right through the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre stroke
 Shattered and sundered ;
Then they rode back, but not,
 Not the six hundred.

35

V

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
 Volleyed and thundered ;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred :

40

45

VI

When can their glory fade ?
O, the wild charge they made !
 All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred !

50

55

Lord Tennyson (1809-92)

THE PAPER BOAT

I remember a day in my childhood when
I floated a paper boat on the stream.

It was a wet day of July ; I was alone and happy over
my play.

I floated my paper boat on the stream. 5

Suddenly the storm-clouds thickened : the wind
came in gusts, and rain poured in torrents.
Rills of muddy water rushed and swelled the stream
and sank my boat.

Bitterly I thought that the storm had come on 10
purpose to spoil my happiness ; all its
anger was against me.

All this long cloudy day of July I have been musing
over those games in life in which I was the
loser. 15

Just now I am blaming my fate for the many tricks it
has played on me, when suddenly I remem-
bered the paper boat that sank in the stream.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)

THE TOYS

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,
His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet 10
From his late sobbing wet.

And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own ;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach, 15
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells,
And two French copper coins, ranged there with
careful art, 20
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said :

Ah, when at last we lie with tranced breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys

25

We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
That I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
“I will be sorry for their childishness.”

30

C. Palmore (1823-96)



THE CHILDREN AND SIR NAMELESS

Sir Nameless, once of Athelhall, declared :

“ These wretched children romping in my park
Trample the herbage till the soil is bared,
And yap and yell from early morn till dark !
Go keep them harnessed to their set routines : 5
Thank God I’ve none to hasten my decay ;
For green remembrance there are better means
Than offspring, who but wish their sires away.”

Sir Nameless of that mansion said anon :

“ To be perpetuate for my mightiness 10
Sculpture must image me when I am gone.”

—He forthwith summoned carvers there express
To shape a figure stretching seven-odd feet
(For he was tall) in alabaster stone,

With shield, and crest, and casque, and sword 15
complete :

When done a statelier work was never known.

Three hundred years hied ; Church-restorers came,
And, no one of his lineage being traced,

They thought an effigy so large in frame

Best fitted for the floor. There it was placed, 20

Under the seats for schoolchildren. And they

Kicked out his name, and hobnailed off his nose ;

And, as they yawn through sermon-time, they say,

“ Who was this old stone man beneath our toes ?”

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)

FORTUNATUS NIMIUM

I have lain in the sun,
I have toil'd as I might,
I have thought as I would,
And now it is night.

My bed full of sleep, 5
My heart of content,
For friends that I met
The way that I went.

I welcome fatigue,
While frenzy and care, 10
Like thin summer clouds,
Go melting in air.

To dream as I may
And awake when I will
With the song of the birds 15
And the sun on the hill.

Or death—were it death—
To what should I wake
Who loved in my home
All life for its sake ? 20

What good have I wrought ?
I laugh to have learned
That joy cannot come
Unless it is earned.

For a happier lot
Than God giveth me
It never hath been
Nor ever shall be.

25

Robert Bridges (1844-1930)

AS WE RUSH, AS WE RUSH IN THE TRAIN

As we rush, as we rush in the train,
The trees and the houses go wheeling back,
But the starry heavens above the plain
Come flying on our track.

All the beautiful stars of the sky,
The silver doves of the forest of Night,
Over the dull earth swarm and fly,
Companions of our flight.

5

We will rush ever on without fear ;
Let the goal be far, the flight be fleet !
For we carry the Heavens with us, dear,
While the Earth slips from our feet !

10

James Thomson (1834-1882)



THE TAJ MAHAL

Said the king all broken-hearted
For his loved and loving wife,
“ Since God willed that we should be parted
By the woe of human life,
Lest the world should e’er forget her 5
This good wife so dear to me,
In a fair tomb I will set her,
So that she remembered be.”

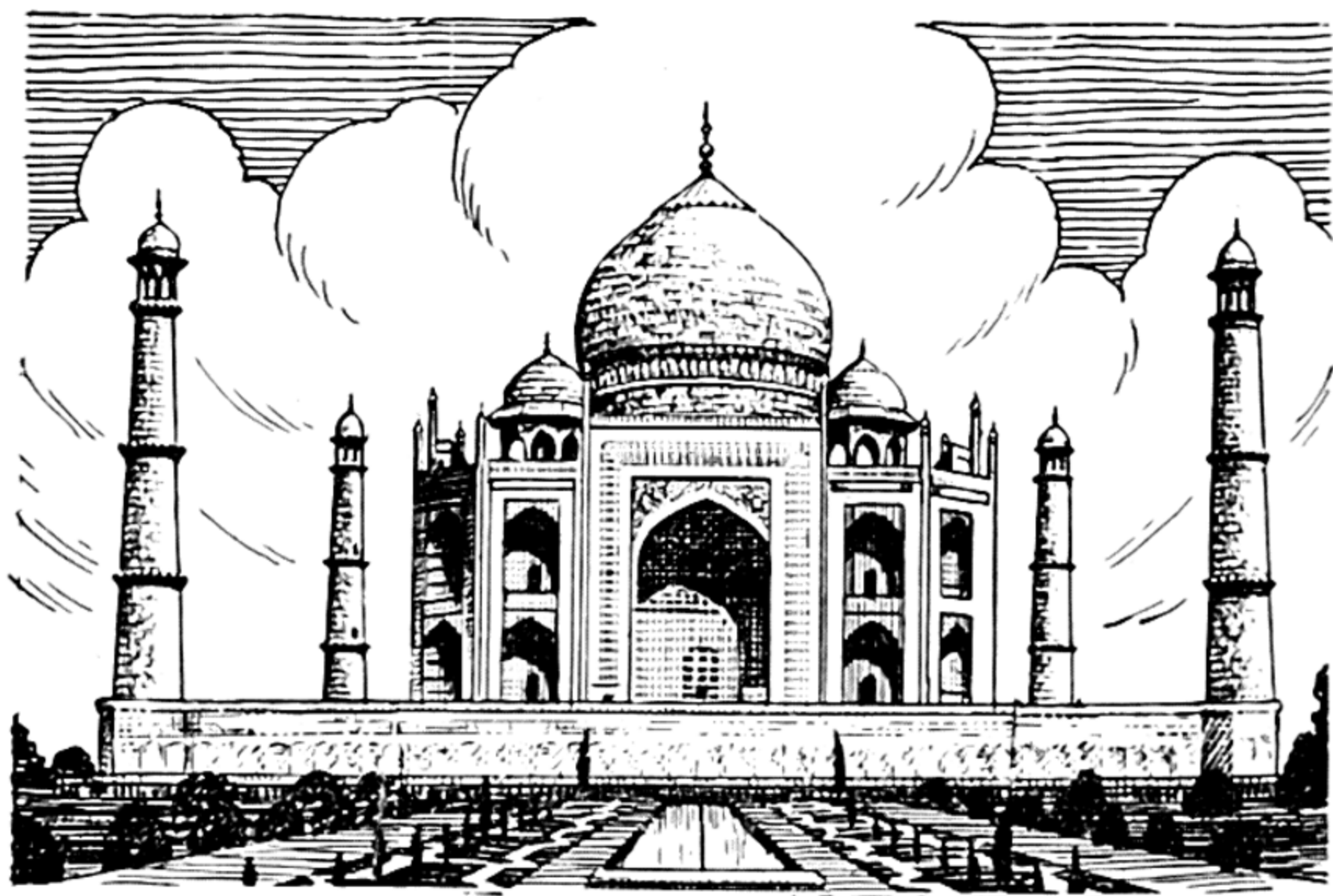
And the king all broken-hearted
Sought for workmen full of skill 10
Who would raise for her, departed,
A fair tomb, with brain and will.
And they built it white and shining,
Flawless, matchless in its grace,

While the king in sorrow pining,
Saw it raised up in its place.

15

Saw it through his bitter grieving
Never less but ever new,
For no comfort e'er receiving
In his sorrow aged he grew ;

20



THE TAJ MAHAL

Till his eyes grown dim with weeping,
Closed for ever on this life,
And they laid him there fast sleeping
By his loved and loving wife.

But the Taj, the tale still telling, 25
Stands in Agra city great,
White and shining, all excelling
In its beauty and its state.
There they lie, the loving-hearted
'Neath its marble side by side, 30
Those in life so long-time parted
Death no longer can divide.

For though pressed from many quarters
True love steadfast still abides,
Is not quenched by many waters, 35
Even death's relentless tides.
All true love is never failing
Howsoe'er men faithless be,
But o'er everything prevailing
Lives to all eternity. 40

Mary Dobson (died 1923)



ROADWAYS

One road leads to London,
One road runs to Wales,
My road leads me seawards
To the white dipping sails.

One road leads to the river, 5
As it goes singing slow ;
My road leads to shipping,
Where the bronzed sailors go.

Leads me, lures me, calls me
To salt green tossing sea ; 10
A road without earth's road-dust
Is the right road for me.

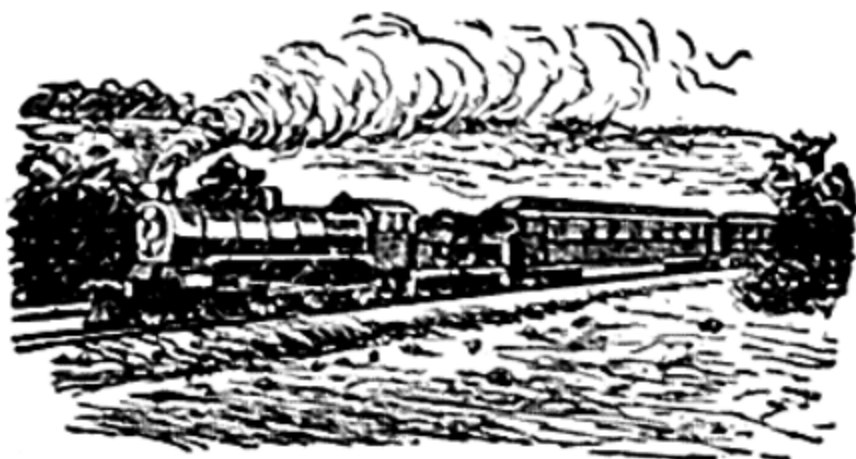
A wet road heaving, shining,
And wild with seagulls' cries,
A mad salt sea-wind blowing 15
The salt spray in my eyes.

My road calls me, lures me
West, east, south, and north ;
Most roads lead men homewards,
My road leads me forth 20

To add more miles to the tally
Of grey miles left behind,
In quest of that one beauty
God put me here to find.

John Masefield (1878—)

THE TRAIN



A green eye—and a red—in the dark.
Thunder—smoke—and a spark,

It is there—it is here—flashed by.
Whither will the wild thing fly ?

It is rushing, tearing thro' the night,
Rending her gloom in its flight.

5

It shatters her silence with shrieks.
What is it the wild thing seeks ?

Alas ! for it hurries away
Them that are fain to stay.

10

Hurrah ! for it carries home
Lovers and friends that roam.

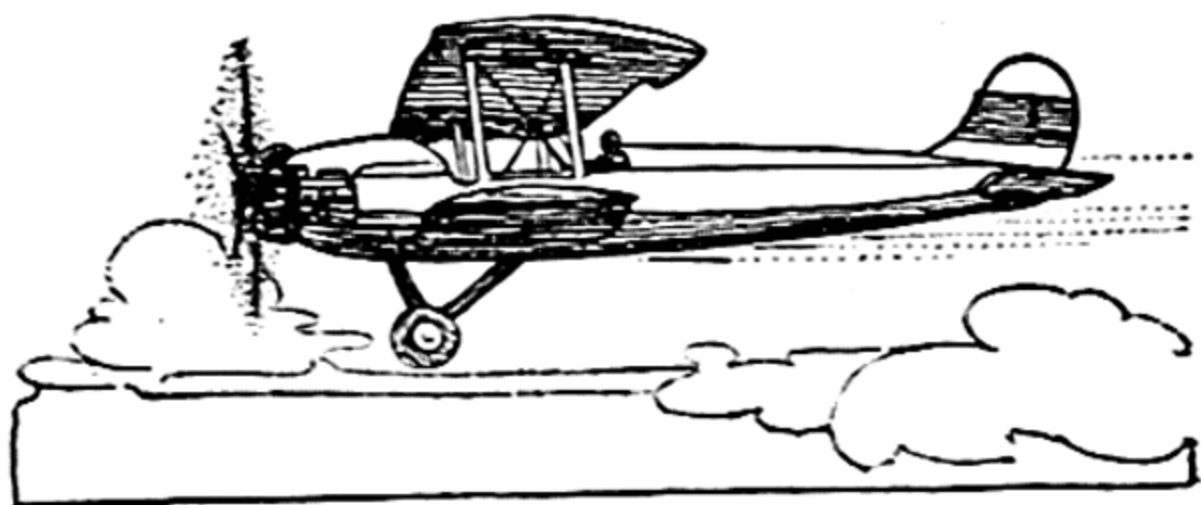
Where are you, Time and Space ?
The world is a little place,

Your reign is over and done,
You are one.

15

Mary Coleridge (1831-1907)

UP AND AWAY



If ever I travel to France or Spain,
I mean to go in an aeroplane.

I've read all about it, and now I know
How they swing the propeller, and off you go !
A run and a bounce, and you're looking down 5
From high in the sky on a little toy town ;
And the fields like a bedspread, green and brown,
With ribbony roads all winding through,
So empty and quiet, it hardly seems true
That anyone's there looking up to see 10
You racing along, like a big letter T,
Through the clouds and into the light,
Smaller and smaller, and out of sight.

And the aeroplane climbs and dips and swings
While loudly and proudly the engine sings, 15
And the pilot sits in his cockpit there,
With the wireless to bring him the news of the air.

Then all of a sudden beneath you there'll be
The tiny ships on the shiny sea,
And next you're Abroad—and I hope it seems 20
Just as lovely as in your dreams,
With castles, cathedrals, and cities with walls,
Forests and fountains and waterfalls,
Great grim mountains all rocks and snow,
And broad, bright rivers away below, 25
Till, tired of the sky, like a bird coming home,
With a dive you arrive at the aerodrome.

It might be *horrid* in fog or rain,
But I mean to go in an aeroplane
If ever I travel to France or Spain. 30

T. Mark.



HOME, SWEET HOME

'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home !
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek thro' the world, is ne'er met with
elsewhere.

Home ! home ! sweet, sweet home !

5

There's no place like home !

There's no place like home !

An exile from home splendour dazzles in vain,
Oh ! give me my lowly thatch'd cottage again !
The birds singing gaily that came at my call, 10
Give me them, with the peace of mind dearer than all.

Home ! home ! sweet, sweet home !

There's no place like home !

There's no place like home !

J. Howard Payne (1791-1852)



THE SLAVE'S DREAM

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand ;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his native land.

5

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed ;
Beneath the palm-trees, on the plain
Once more a king he strode ;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain road.

10

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand ;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids,
And fell into the sand.

15

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank ;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

20

Before him, like a blood-red flag, 25
The bright flamingoes flew ;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view. 30

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyæna scream ;
And the river-horse as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream ;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums, 35
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty ;
And the blast of the desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free, 40
That he started in his sleep, and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day ;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep, 45
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away !

H. W. Longfellow (1807-1882)

THE SOLITUDE OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK

I am monarch of all I survey ;
My right there is none to dispute ;
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.

O Solitude ! where are the charms 5
That sages have seen in thy face ?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone, 10
Never hear the sweet music of speech ;
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see ;
They are so unacquainted with man, 15
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, Friendship, and Love,
Divinely bestow'd upon man,
O had I the wings of a dove
How soon would I taste you again ! 20
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport, 25
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more :
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me ? 30
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind !
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind, 35
And the swift-winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there ;
But alas ! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair. 40

But the seafowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair ;
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place, 45
And mercy, encouraging thought !
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

W. Cowper (1731-1800)

THE MILLER OF THE DEE

There dwelt a miller, hale and bold,
Beside the river Dee,
He wrought and sang from morn to night,
No lark more blithe than he,
And this the burden of his song
For ever used to be,
“ I envy nobody, no, not I,
And nobody envies me.”

5

“ Thou’rt wrong, my friend ! ” said old King Hal,
“ Thou’rt wrong as wrong can be ;
For could my heart be light as thine,
I’d gladly change with thee.
And tell me now what makes thee sing
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I’m the King,
Beside the river Dee ? ”

10

15

The miller smiled, and doffed his cap :

“ I earn my bread,” quoth he ;
“ I love my wife, I love my friends,
I love my children three ;
I owe no penny I cannot pay,
I thank the river Dee,
That turns the mill that grinds the corn,
To feed my babes and me.”

20

“ Good friend !” said Hal, and sighed the while, 25

“ Farewell ! and happy be ;

But say no more if thou’dst be true,

That no one envies thee.

Thy mealy cap is worth my crown,—

Thy mill, my kingdom’s fee !

30

Such men as thou are England’s boast,

O miller of the Dee !”

C. Mackay (1814-1889)

RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

I

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring

The Winter Garment of Repentance fling ;

The Bird of time has but a little way

To fly—and Lo ! the Bird is on the Wing.

II

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,

5

And those that after a To-morrow stare,

A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,

‘ Fools ! your Reward is neither Here nor There !’

III

Ah, Love ! could thou and I with Fate conspire

To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire, 10

Would not we shatter it to bits—and then

Re-mould it nearer to the Heart’s Desire !

E. Fitzgerald (1809-1883)



LOCHINVAR

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the West !
Through all the 'wide Border his steed was the best ;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar. 5

He stay'd not for brake, and he stopp'd not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none ;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late : 10
For a laggard in love and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen and kinsmen, and brothers, and all :
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword, 15
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)

“ O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar ?”

“ I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied ;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide, 20
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar.”

The bride kiss'd the goblet : the knight took it up, 25
He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
“ Now tread we a measure !” said young Lochinvar. 30

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace ;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and
plume ;

And the bride-maidens whisper'd, “ 'Twere better
by far, 35
To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.”

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reach'd the hall-door ; and the charger
stood near ;

So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung ! 40
“She is won ! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur ;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow,” quoth young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby
clan ;

Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and
they ran :

There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee, 45
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar ?

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

THE BROOK

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges. 5

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river ;
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever. 10

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddyng bays,
I babble on the pebbles. 15

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow. 20

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river ;
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling. 25

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel, 30
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel ;

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river ;
For men may come and men may go, 35
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers ;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers. 40

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows ;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars 45
In brambly wildernesses ;
I linger by my shingly bars,
I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river ; 50
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)



SWEET AUBURN

(from "*The Deserted Village.*")

Sweet Auburn ! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed ;
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease, 5
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene ;
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm. 10

The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
 The decent church that topped the neighbouring hill,
 The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
 ➤ For talking age and whispering lovers made !
 How often have I blessed the coming day, 15
 When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
 And all the village train, from labour free,
 Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree ;
 While many a pastime circled in the shade,
 The young contending as the old surveyed ; 20
 And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
 And sleights of art and feats of strength went round ;
 And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
 Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired ;
 The dancing pair that simply sought renown, 25
 ➤ By holding out to tire each other down ;
 The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
 While secret laughter tittered round the place ;
 The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,
 The matron's glance that would those looks reprove : 30
 These were thy charms ; sweet village ! sports like these,
 With sweet succession, taught even toil to please ;
 These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
 These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Oliver Goldsmith (1730-1774)

AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT

As thro' the land at eve we went,
And plucked the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
We fell out, I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.

5

And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears !

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

10

Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

SAD STORY OF A MOTOR FAN

Young Ethelred was only three,
Or somewhere thereabouts, when he
Began to show in divers ways
The early stages of the craze

For learning the particulars 5
 Of motor-bikes and motor-cars.
 He started with a little book
 To enter numbers which he took,
 And, though his mother often said,
 “ Now, do be careful, Ethelred ; 10
 Oh, dear ! Oh, dear ! what shall I do
 If anything runs over you ?”
 (Which Ethelred could hardly know,
 And sometimes crossly told her so),
 It didn't check his zeal a bit, 15
 But rather seemed to foster it ;
 Indeed it would astonish you
 To hear of all the things he knew.
 He guessed the make (and got it right)
 Of every car that came in sight, 20
 And knew as well its m.p.g.,
 Its m.p.h. and £ s. d.,
 What gears it had, what brakes, and what—
 In short he knew an awful lot.
 Now, when a boy thinks day and night 25
 Of motor-cars with all his might
 He gets affected in the head,
 And so it was with Ethelred.
 He called himself a “ Packford Eight ”
 And wore a little number-plate 30
 Attached behind with bits of string,
 And cranked himself like anything,

And buzzed and rumbled ever so
 Before he got himself to go.
 He went about on all his fours, 35
 And usually, to get indoors,
 He pressed a button, then reversed,
 And went in slowly, backmost first.
 He took long drinks from mug and cup
 To fill his radiator up 40
 Before he started out for school
 ("It kept," he said, "his engine cool") ;
 And when he got to school he tried
 To park himself all day outside,
 At which the Head became irate 45
 And caned him on his number-plate.
 So week by week he grew more like
 A motor-car or motor-bike,
 Until one day an oily smell
 Hung round him, and he wasn't well. 50
 "That's odd," he said ; "I wonder what
 Has caused the sudden pains I've got.
 No motor gets an aching tum
 Through taking in petroleum."
 With that he cranked himself, but no, 55
 He couldn't get himself to go,
 But merely buzzed a bit inside,
 Then gave a faint chug-chug and died.
 Now, since his petrol-tank was full,
 They labelled him, "Inflammable," 60

And wisely saw to it that he
Was buried safely out at sea.
So, if at any time your fish
Should taste a trifle oilyish,
You'll know that fish has lately fed
On what remains of Ethelred.

65

H. A. Field.

SIX AND OUT

(A Street Impression)

The pitch was only smooth in parts ;
It sank at either crease,
And motor vans and bakers' carts
At times disturbed the peace.

The bowlers found it hard to hit
The lamp-post's slender stem.
The broader wicket, opposite,
Was cleared at 6 P.M.

5

It was a keen, determined school,
Unorthodox and free ;
Harsh circumstance oft made the rule,
And not the M. C. C.

10

The scorer, seated by the well,
Kept up a fire of talk ;
He was both umpires, crowd, and all,
And plied a busy chalk.

15

So, standing musing on the scene,
I let the moments pass :
How well he drove it to the screen.
And then—the crash of glass !

20

I watched the players as they ran,
And heard, while yet they fled,
The loud voice of an angry man,
The law's majestic tread.

G. D. Martineau.

AND HIS DAY'S WORK WAS DONE

I often lie abed and think
What an awful thing is work ;
I know a lot who've started it
And finished with a jerk.

There's Berry Bob, he got a job
To drive a motor-car ;

5

Said, " Blow the p'lice, I'll let 'em see
I know what motors are !"

One hundred miles an hour he went
And quite enjoyed the fun ;
A brewer's dray got in his way—
And his day's work was done !

10

A shooting competition was

The end of Jimmy Duff ;

He got a job as marker for

The first time in his puff.

He didn't understand the work,

But when he heard the shots,

He thought it must be time for him

To go and mark the spots.

So he stood in front of the target

For to see which man had won.

He stopped a shot in a tender spot—

And his day's work was done !

15

20

I knew a man who got a job

With a menagerie ;

'Twas just to feed the animals—

As easy as could be !

He didn't know their appetites

That was the funny part ;

25

30

Still, when the feeding time came round
He had to make a start.
He went into the lion's den
And offered it a bun ;
The lion smiled, and then got wild—
And his day's work was done !

35

To be a strong man was the fad
Of Jerry Macintyre.
And just for practice now and then
He let himself on hire.
He went to do a moving job,
Some heavy things to shift.
And just to let the others see
How much weight he could lift
With a grand piano on his back,
Upstairs he tried to run,
Trod on a stair that wasn't there—
And his day's work was done !

40

45

Now, Tim, he got work in a field
Some cabbages to pull ;
No sooner had he started than
He saw a barmy bull—
His rudder cocked up in the air
And making for him too !

50

Said Tim, “ I’ll turn my back to him, 55
And just see what he’ll do !”
So he shut his eyes, and waited
While the bull kept on the run ;
Then he got a shock that “ stopped his clock ”
And his day’s work was done ! 60

Now, Pat went for a sailor, and
He thought the job was soft ;
He’d hardly got abroad when he
Was ordered up aloft.
He funk’d a bit, but up he went— 65
In fact, he had no choice—
Was hanging on a top rope when
He heard the captain’s voice.
“ Let go that rope !” the captain yelled.
Says Pat, “ He means this one !” 70
At once let go—came down below—
And his day’s work was done !

T. W. Connor.



THE INCHCAPE ROCK

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was as still as she could be,
Her sails from heaven received no motion,
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

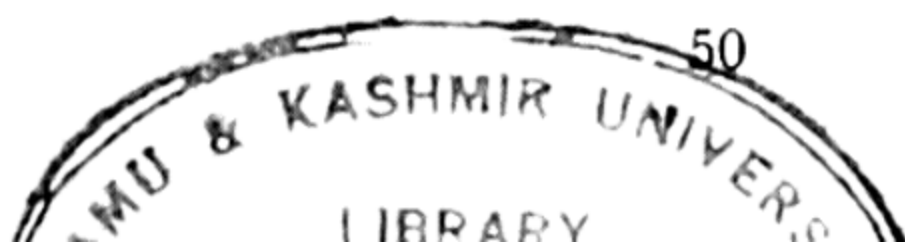
Without either sign or sound of their shock, 5
The waves flowed over the Inchcape Rock ;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The good old Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock ; 10
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the Rock was hid by the surges' swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell ;
And then they knew the perilous Rock, 15
And blest the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day ;
The sea-birds screamed as they wheeled round,
And there was joyance in their sound. 20

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen
A darker speck on the ocean green ;



Sir Ralph the Rover walked his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

➤ He felt the cheering power of spring, 25
It made him whistle, it made him sing ;
His heart was mirthful to excess,
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float ;
Quoth he, "My men, put out the boat, 30
And row me to the Inchcape Rock
And I'll plague the priest of Aberbrothok."

The boat is lowered, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go ;
➤ Sir Ralph bent over from the boat, 35
And he cut the bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sunk the bell, with a gurgling sound,
The bubbles rose and burst around ;
Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to the Rock
Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok." 40

Sir Ralph the Rover sailed away,
➤ He scoured the seas for many a day ;
And now grown rich with plundered store,
He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky, 45
They cannot see the sun on high ;
The wind hath blown a gale all day,
At evening it hath died away.

On deck the Rover takes his stand,
So dark it is they see no land. 50
Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising moon."

"Can'st hear," said one, "the breakers roar ?
For methinks we should be near the shore."
"Now where we are I cannot tell, 55
But I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell."

They hear no sound, the swell is strong ;
Though the wind hath fallen, they drift along,
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock,—
"O Christ ! it is the Inchcape Rock." 60

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair,
He cursed himself in his despair ;
The waves rushed in on every side,
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But even in his dying fear 65
One dreadful sound could the Rover hear,
A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell,
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

Robert Southey (1774-1843)



ORPHEUS

Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain tops that freeze,
Bow themselves when he did sing ;
To his music plants and flowers
Ever sprung ; as sun and showers
There had made a lasting spring.

5

Every thing that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art,
Killing care and grief of heart
Fall asleep, or hearing, die.

10

W. Shakespeare (1564-1616)

BREATHES THERE THE MAN
WITH SOUL SO DEAD

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
‘ This is my own, my native land !’
Whose heart hath ne’er within him burned
As home his footsteps he hath turned 5
From wandering on a foreign strand ?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well ;
For him no minstrel raptures swell ;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim ; 10
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentrated all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung, 15
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

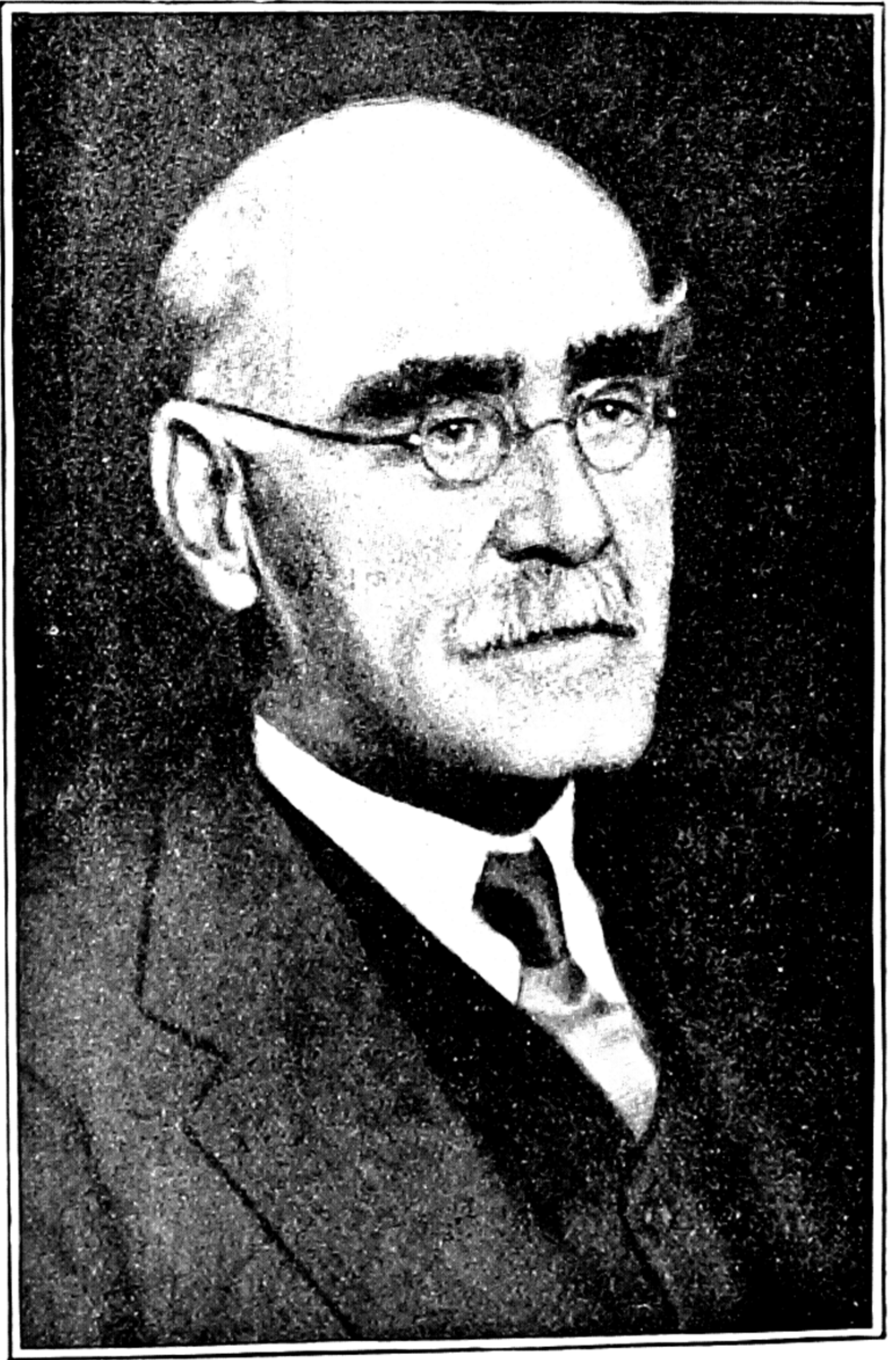
“ FOR ALL WE HAVE AND ARE ”

For all we have and are,
For all our children's fate,
Stand up and meet the war,
The Hun is at the gate !

Our world has passed away
In wantonness o'erthrown.
There is nothing left to-day
But steel and fire and stone !

Though all we knew depart,
The old commandments stand :
“ In courage keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand.”

Once more we hear the word
That sickened earth of old :—
“ No law except the Sword
Unsheathed and uncontrolled.”
Once more it knits mankind,
Once more the nations go
To meet and break and bind
A crazed and driven foe.



RUDYARD KIPLING

Comfort, content, delight,
The ages' slow-bought gain,
They shrivelled in a night,
Only ourselves remain

To face the naked days
In silent fortitude
Through perils and dismays
Renewed and re-renewed.

25

Though all we made depart,
The old commandments stand :—
“ In patience keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand.”

30

No easy hopes or lies
Shall bring us to our goal,
But iron sacrifice
Of body, will, and soul.
There is but one task for all—
For each one life to give.
Who stands if freedom fall ?
Who dies if England live ?

35

40

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

IF—

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you :
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too ;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting, 5
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise.

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master ;
If you can think—and not make thoughts
your aim ; 10

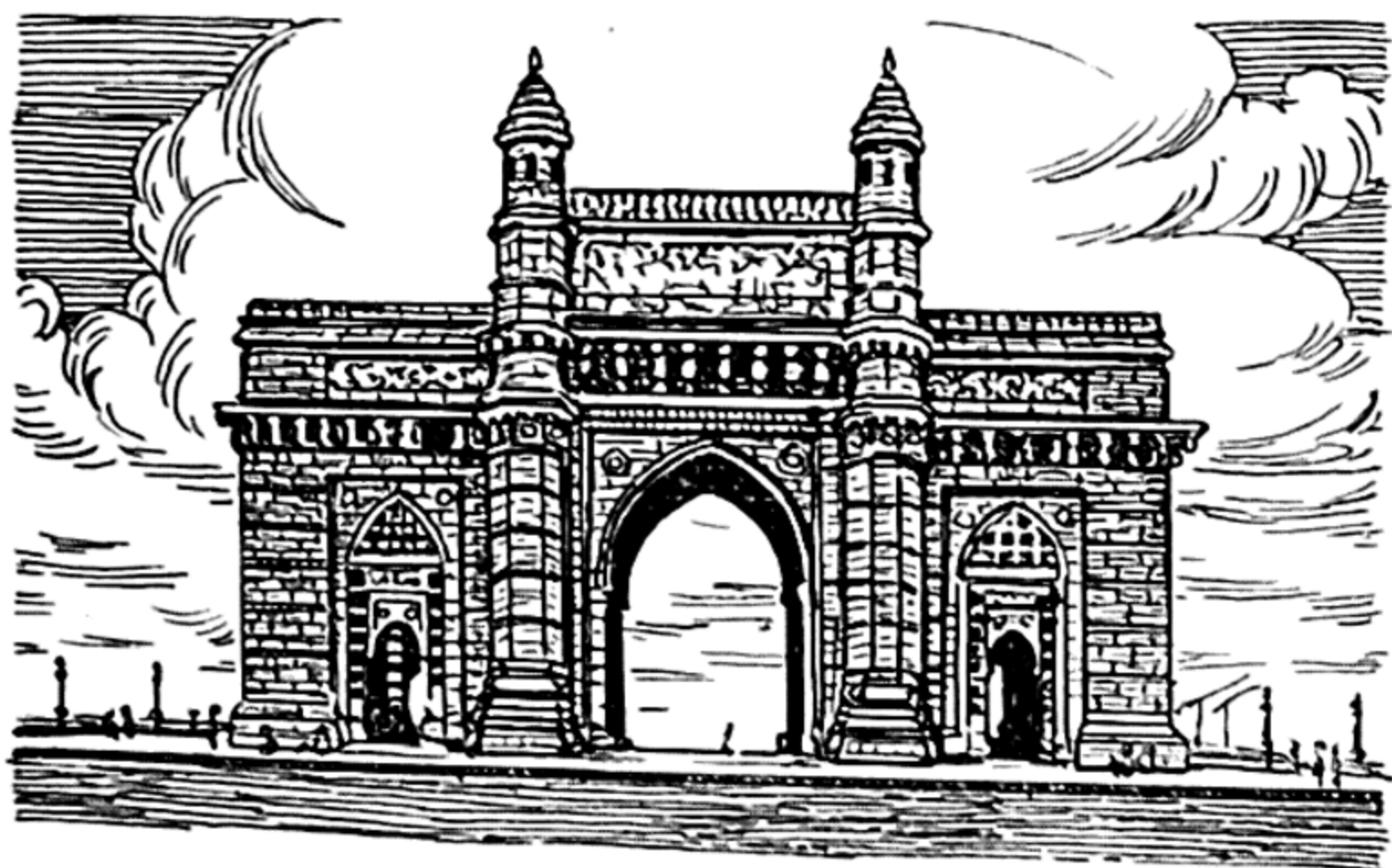
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same ;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken, 15
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools.

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss ; 20

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the will which says to them : “ Hold on !”

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, 25
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much ;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run, 30
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son !

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)



NOTES

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT !

This noble hymn by an eminent Churchman is a favourite with school-boys, and its appeal to the heart is irresistible. It was one of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite hymns.

The phrase " Kindly Light " means light received from God to guide us through a life which is full of darkness. In order to know exactly why this phrase bears this meaning you had better read the interesting account of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, led by Moses, under the guidance of a pillar of light which went before them to show them the way. (Refer to the Bible, Old Testament, Exodus, Chapter 13.)

The poet prays for divine light ; for without this help from Providence one cannot get away from the sins and errors and temptations of life.

(*The figures refer to lines of the poems.*)

- 1. **encircling gloom** : surrounding darkness.
- 3. **home** : heaven ; (our real and eternal home).
- 11. **garish** : overbright and showy.
- 15. **fen** : low marshy land.
crag : steep rock.
- 15-16. **till the night is gone** : till life on this earth ends.
- 17. **morn** : morning ; life after death.

THE CALL TO EVENING PRAYER

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu needs no introduction to an Indian student. Her contribution to Indian life is rich and many-sided. A political leader of eminence, a powerful and eloquent orator, a tireless social worker and, above all, a great literary writer and poet,—she represents the genius and culture of the East, perfected by the very best training and scholarship of the West. Her gift of poetry is inimitable. Rightly has she been called, “The Nightingale of India.”

In this delightful poem, Mrs. Naidu refers to the quiet and blissful atmosphere of the evening, when prayers are offered in various religious places. The Muslim devotees, the Christian priests, the fire-worshipping Parsees, the Hindus, all chant their evening prayers with love and devotion. The poem brings out to perfection the sacredness of the evening atmosphere.

2. **muezzin** : one who calls the faithful to the mosque for *namaz*.
6. **Ave Maria** : “Hail Mary”, the first words of Gabriel’s salutation to the Virgin Mary, the holy mother of Christ. Devotional words repeated by Roman Catholics.
9. **orisons** : prayers.
vespers : evening worship.
11. **Ahura Mazda** : God’s holy name according to the Parsees.
12. **Avesta** : the sacred writings of the Parsees and attributed to Zoroaster.
13. **Flame** : fire ; Parsees worship fire.
17. **invocation** : prayer.
19. **adoration** : worship.

THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT ON HIGH

“God’s majesty” is the theme of this poem. The sky, the stars, the sun, the moon—in fact, the entire creation—proclaim his glory.

1. **firmament** : sky.
2. **etherea!** : formed of ether ; heavenly, celestial.
3. **spangled** : glittering with small shining objects ; starry.
4. **great Original** : Divine Creator.
5. **unwearied** : untiring.
9. **evening shades prevail** : begins to get dark in the evenings.
10. **takes up** : continues.
18. **terrestrial ball** : the earth.
21. **Reason’s ear** : to the thoughtful listener.

THE PSALM OF LIFE

This song of life, composed by one of the greatest poets of America, gives us the poet’s noble idea of life. According to him, life is real and those who call it a dream are really dead. Life furnishes great opportunities for bettering ourselves, and by discharging our duties and performing our allotted task we can make it noble. It is up to us to see that we so conduct ourselves that each day we may find ourselves better than before, striving hard and leaving the result to Providence.

1. **numbers** : verses.
5. **earnest** : serious ; not to be trifled with.
7. **Dust.....returnest** : a quotation from the Bible (refers to the body and not to the soul).
10. **destined** : appointed ; fixed.

13. **fleeting** : passing quickly.
15. **muffled drums** : at a funeral drums are covered with cloth to deaden the sound and make it more solemn.
18. **bivouac** : (bivoak) : an open-air encampment of soldiers.
- 19-20. *i.e.*, fight the battle of life manfully, do great deeds, control your circumstances and do not yield to them.
26. **sublime** : noble.
27. **departing** : when we die.
30. **main** : ocean.
31. **a forlorn and shipwrecked brother** : a failure in life who is distressed at his own moral and material ruin.
34. **heart for any fate** : courage to face any event, favourable or unfavourable.

ABOU BEN ADHEM

This poem may be read and re-read for the nobility of sentiment that it expresses. Through a simple unadorned story, one of the noblest moral lessons has been conveyed to us—the lesson of the fellowship of men. The best way to worship God is to love our fellow-men.

4. **making** : goes with ‘moonlight.’
rich : full of radiance.
like a lily in bloom : beautifully pure and white like a lily.
6. **peace** : of mind ; see 1. 2.
7. **Presence** : angel—a term of respect.
8. **vision** : the same as above.
9. **made of** : full of.
accord : harmony ; concord.
17. **whom** : of those whom.

I WANDER'D LONELY AS A CLOUD

Wordsworth in this poem describes the intense joy that a poet feels when all at once a beautiful collection of pretty flowers, "tossing their heads in sprightly dance" beside a lake, bursts on his view.

- 4. **daffodils** : an English plant with large bright yellow bell-shaped flowers.
- 12. **sprightly** : lively.
- 16. **jocund** : merry ; cheerful.
- 18. **show** : the beautiful scene.
- 20. **pensive** : thoughtful.

THE MAN HE KILLED

This is a beautiful short poem by Thomas Hardy. He brings out pathetically the difference in man's behaviour in times of peace and war. Whereas, if he meets a fellowman as a friend, he entertains and helps him ; as an enemy in a battle, he has no qualms of conscience in killing the very same man outright.

- 3-4. **to wet right many a nipperkin** : A nipperkin is a small wine cup. The meaning therefore is : we would have enjoyed each other's company in eating and drinking like good friends.
- 13. **'list** : shortened form of ' enlist ', *i.e.*, join the army.
- 15. **traps** : small or portable articles for dress, furniture, etc., luggage.
- 19. **bar** : a place where wine is served.

THE CHILD'S FIRST GRIEF

The bereaved child calls forth our sympathy. He has lost his brother who used to be his playmate. Innocently, he asks his mother to call his brother back as he cannot play alone. The mother mournfully tells him that his brother's recall is impossible as he is in heaven. The child does not understand what death is. His only regret is that he did not love his brother much more while he was with him.

- 6. **Across the sunbeam's track** : in the rays of the sun.
- 7. **chase its flight** : run after the butterfly.
- 17. The rose is a short-lived flower. It is so pretty, but its beauty does not last long, and it soon withers away.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

The remarkable incident described in this poem refers to the Battle of Balaclava in the Crimean War in 1854, when a bold though fatal charge was made by the Light Brigade of British horse soldiers on the Russians, and all due to a misunderstood order. It is said that the actual order was different and the soldiers knew this. Yet, true to the traditions of unflinching obedience and loyalty, each one of the six hundred brave men unhesitatingly rushed to what was certain death.

- 3. **valley of Death** : so called because Death faced those who entered therein.
- 12. **blundered** : made a mistake (in conveying the order to the soldiers).
- 22. **stormed at** : fired upon.
- 27. **sabres** : heavy swords.

34. **Cossack** : warlike people living in the South and East of Russia.
38. why ? because their number had been greatly thinned.
50. **fade** : grow dim.
51. It was a mistake and a huge waste of power from the military point of view, but the effect of such a deed of heroism on the morale of the army and the nation cannot be too highly estimated.

THE PAPER BOAT

This little prose-poem by Tagore is simple, yet beautiful. Reminiscences of childhood are pleasing to the grown-up mind. Imagine a child playing “ paper-boats ”, when all of a sudden a heavy downpour of rain spoils the fun and ruins the boats. The child’s mortification is great and he feels that the rain is his bitter enemy. But is it really so ?

Similarly, when in adversity we feel that fate is specially unkind to us. But, like the child, our judgment is wrong.

10-11. **on purpose** : with a special object.

THE TOYS

“ The poet says that one evening he was angry with his little boy because he had disobeyed him. He struck him and sent him to bed without the usual good-night kiss. But later he felt sorry that he had been so harsh and he went to the boy’s room, fearing that the child might be lying awake, grieving. He was, however, fast sleep ; but his eyelashes were still wet with the tears he had shed. The father pitied the sorrowful child, and kissed him as he slept ; and he could not help shedding some tears himself

at the pathetic sight of the child's toys arranged carefully on the table by his bed.

As he prayed to God that night, the poet realised that, as his son was only a child, whose chief pleasure was in his little toys and who could not fully understand the importance of his father's commands for his good, so we, in the sight of God, our Father, are only weak and ignorant children and when we sleep in death God, knowing how little we could understand His great pleasures, will have pity on us and say, 'I will be sorry for them, because they are only children.' ”
—*Martin*.

- 2. **wise** : manner.
- 16. **counters** : disc of wood, used in certain table-games.
red-vein'd stone : a stone with a vein, or streak of red in it.
- 17. **abraded** : worn ; rubbed smooth by the waves of the shore.
- 19. **bluebells** : an English wild flower.
- 24. **with tranced breath** : breath suspended, or breathing stopped as in a trance.
- 25. **not vexing Thee in death** : when we are dead we cannot grieve God any more with our sins and mistakes.
- 31. **moulded from the clay** : the Bible says that when God created men, he formed them of "the dust of the ground and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life."

THE CHILDREN AND SIR NAMELESS

This is a quaint and somewhat humorous story told by Thomas Hardy, the illustrious novelist and poet, who died in 1928. Sir Nameless, a proud, self-satisfied gentleman, the owner

of a large estate, strongly objected to children. He disliked them playing in his park, and he was glad that he had no family of his own ; for according to his sour, grudging spirit, they would only wish he were dead so that they might possess his lands. Arrogantly, he ordered a great statue to be sculptured, representing him as a knight in armour, to be placed in the church, “ to be, ” as he said, “ perpetuate for my mightiness.” But in course of time nobody remembered him, he having no descendants. Church-restorers disliked the great effigy, so they had it placed under the seats where the school children sat at church. And then we see the irony of the story, for *children* “ kicked out his name, and hob-nailed off his nose ” and said to one another, “ who was this old stone man beneath our toes.”

5. **harnessed to their set routines** : engaged in their daily task as arranged for them by their elders (fixing time for each item in a scheme for the whole day).
7. **for green remembrance** : to immortalise my name.
8. **sires** : fathers.
12. **carvers** : sculptors.
express : urgently.
14. **alabaster** : a white soft stone used in sculpture.
17. **hied** : passed in haste.
18. **lineage** : descendants.
22. **hobnailed off his nose** : roughly and crudely rubbed off the nose from the statue with their hobnailed shoes and boots.

FORTUNATUS NIMIUM

Robert Bridges was one of the most brilliant poets of the present century. He died in 1930. He was the “ Poet Laureate ” of England.

The poem has a Latin title, *Fortunatus Nimium*—exceedingly happy—a title that is most fitting to the substance of the poem. Bridges praises the healthy life that is made up of work and play and rest in turn without undue pressure.

He asks two questions in the poem : “ Supposing his sleep were death ?” and “ What good have I wrought ?” The first he does not answer, for none can answer it : but he has faith and hope in the future, for he has loved “ all life for its sake ” ; and the second he does answer, and his reply is, “ that joy cannot come unless it is earned.” The closing stanza summarises the whole in a simple, emphatic and delightful way ;

For a happier lot
Than God giveth me
It never hath been
Nor ever shall be.

10. **frenzy** : violent agitation of the mind.
care : anxiety.

AS WE RUSH, AS WE RUSH IN THE TRAIN

While journeying in a train we find the earth, the trees and the houses slip past us ; but the stars keep company with us. They do not disappear from our view, nor do they forsake our company. From this experience the poet draws the inspiring conclusion that in our journey through life also the worldly things may slip away from us, but “ we carry the Heavens with us.”

6. **The silver doves of the forest of Night** : stars.
(Examine critically this highly poetic expression. What figure of speech is used ?)

THE TAJ MAHAL

Who has not heard of the "Taj Mahal" of Agra, the magnificent mausoleum built by Shah Jahan in memory of his wife, Mumtaz Mahal ? The emperor wished to make "imperishable a tear-drop of love" through this "dream in marble", as it has been called. The Taj is indeed the symbolic expression of the king's love for his consort.

"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts" is perhaps very true of this tender song of Mary Dobson.

- 10. **sought for** : summoned.
- 12. **with brain and will** : with intelligence and determination.
- 14. **matchless in its grace** : unsurpassed in beauty.
- 15. **pining** : to languish and grow weak under distress or grief.
- 34. **abides** : survives ; lives.

ROADWAYS

This is one of John Masefield's sea-songs. In his youth he ran away to sea and acquired considerable experience as a sailor. This poem feelingly expresses a sailor's earnest longing to be on the sea again, where he can find contentment

In quest of that one beauty
God put me here to find.

- 4. **dipping sails** : sails which are gradually disappearing below the horizon.
- 8. **bronzed** : sun-burnt.

THE TRAIN

To the young, a railway train provides endless pleasure and excitement. The poem expresses some thoughts that come to our mind when we see a train—it rushes headlong continuously, whistling, separating some old friends and bringing some others together. Time and space are reduced almost to nothing and the world seems to stretch only over little space, as the train provides a quick means of communication.

- 5. **tearing thro' the night** : rushing along, penetrating the darkness of the night.
- 10. **fain to stay** : would be glad to remain together.

UP AND AWAY

Generally speaking, it is the burning desire of every young person to travel in an aeroplane. In this poem are expressed the thrills of an air flight and the changing panorama of sights and scenes that one sees whilst flying from England, across the English Channel, to the Continent.

- 8. **ribbony roads** : narrow thin strips (roads) which look like ribbons from the height in an aeroplane.
- 11. **letter 'T'** : an aeroplane while flying looks like the letter 'T.'
- 16. **cockpit** : where the pilot sits.
- 20. **Abroad** : on the continent of Europe.
- 28. **horrid** : unpleasant.

HOME, SWEET HOME

The poet touches a vital chord within us by his song of love for home. Who is there who does not cherish in his bosom the strongest feeling of affection for his home ? Be he rich or poor,

his home is a symbol of all that he holds dear and sacred in his life—his joys and pleasures, his domestic felicity and his peace of mind. Indeed there is no place like one's own home in the whole wide world.

- 3. **charm** : blessing.
 - hallow us** : make us feel secure under Heaven's protection.
 - 4. **seek** : even if we seek it.
 - ne'er met with** : is in no case to be felt so strongly.
 - 8. **in vain** : without making him cease to long for home.
 - 11. **with** : and.
- (*Note* :—This is a very suitable poem for recitation.)

THE SLAVE'S DREAM

This touching poem is about an African chief who was brought to America as a slave. When America was being colonised shiploads of these slaves were brought and sold, thus providing cheap labour. They were treated very cruelly. Though physically slaves and captives, their minds were free to recollect the memories of their old homes in their native country. This African slave dies, happy in the thought of his land of birth.

- 3. **matted** : curly.
- 8. **Niger** : An African river.
- 11. **tinkling caravans** : groups of camels with bells round their necks, which ring as they move.
- 23-24. In his dream this chieftain, now a slave, fancied himself on his battle-horse, as in the good old days, and he heard the sheath of his sword striking against the side of the horse as he galloped along.

29. **Caffre** : kafir ; a tribe of Africa.
35. **it** : *i.e.*, the whole scene.
roll : continuous sound.
36. **triumph** : stately procession.
37. **myriad tongues** : in countless voices.
42. **tempestuous glee** : intense joy.
47. **worn-out fetter** : an old chain tied to the feet of the prisoners.

THE SOLITUDE OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK

This is a well-known poem. Alexander Selkirk was shipwrecked and found himself on a lonely island, uninhabited by human beings. His authority was supreme and undisputed there ; yet he felt miserable. He longed for the company of other men, but being deprived of this very natural blessing, he chafed at his loneliness. The remembrance of his friends at home and the feeling that he would never see them again depressed him, and he was driven to despair. God's mercy, however, enabled him to bear all his sorrows and discomforts patiently and he felt reconciled to his lot.

6. **sages** : wise men ; *rishis*.
18. **bestow'd upon** : given to.
21. **assuage** : soften ; lessen.
23. **wisdom of age** : ripe experience of aged persons.
24. **sallies of youth** : merriment of young persons.
25. **sport** : plaything.
33. **glance of the mind** : flight of thought ; vision of mind.
39. **recollection at hand** : remembrance of my immediate presence.

- 40. **despair** : hopelessness.
- 42. **lair** : den.
- 47. **gives even affliction a grace** : softens the rigour of our troubles.
- 48. **reconciles man to his lot** : makes a man feel contented with his lot.

THE MILLER OF THE DEE

One cannot fail to be impressed by the feeling of joy and contentment of the miller who excites the envy even of the king. The former, though poor, is happy, contented and carefree, while the latter, though possessed of a kingly estate, bears out the saying, "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." Poverty is thus no bar to happiness, provided one earns his bread by the sweat of one's brow, is free from greed and is of good cheer. Even a king envies the rare good luck of such a poor man—he is even prepared to change places with him.

- 2. **river Dee** : flows into the Irish Sea.
- 3. **wrought** : worked hard.
- 4. **blithe** : cheerful ; happy.
- 9. **King Hal** : King Henry the Eighth.
- 29. **Thy mealy cap** : 'mealy' means 'white with flour.'
The very profession of a miller makes his clothes dusty and white.
- 30. **is worth my kingdom's fee** : 'fee' means 'possession.' Gives you greater contentment and joy than the kingdom which I hold.
- 31. **boast** : pride.

RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

In Persia, in the 11th Century, there lived an astronomer-poet named Omar Khayyam (Omar, the tent-maker). He became famous for a very special form of poetry as also for his cheerful philosophy of life. His best known work is the *Rubaiyat*.

His poems were translated by Edward Fitzgerald (1809-83), who has succeeded in an extraordinary measure in retaining the spirit of the original, even though his rendering be not always literal. His language has a beauty of its own and the translation is thus equally enjoyable.

3. spring is likened to fire, repentance to a winter garment and time to a bird.
6. **stare** : gaze ; build upon future hopes.
8. **here nor there** : neither in the present nor in the future.
10. **scheme of things entire** : creation with everything that obtains in it.

LOCHINVAR

Sir Walter Scott is an excellent storyteller, both in prose and in verse. In this popular ballad, he tells us how in olden days brave young men in Scotland possessed the necessary dash and pluck to do extraordinary things. In this case, Young Lochinvar, determined to marry Ellen, appears in a hostile camp and, in the face of danger and opposition, runs away with the girl, right from under her father's nose.

Scott, always a patriot, extols his countrymen. Such deeds of chivalry and daring are also to be met with in our Indian tales.

7. **brake** : thicket.
10. **had consented** : to marry the other man (bridegroom),
though against her wish, as she loved the brave
Lochinvar.
11. compare “laggard” and “dastard” with “gallant”
in l. 10.
13. **Netherby Hall** : the home of Ellen, his lady love.
16. **craven** : coward.
20. spring-tides in the river Solway are believed to be special-
ly powerful.
21. **lost** : that has ebbed away.
22. **measure** : dance.
27. **to sigh** : she was somewhat anxious as to the outcome of
Lochinvar's arrival.
29. **bar** : prevent.
30. **tread we a measure** : let us dance.
38. **charger** : horse.
41. **scaur** : steep rock.
- 43-44. the names of the various clans supporting the Lord
of Netherby Hall are given here.

THE BROOK

Just as a painter paints his picture with brush and colours, Tennyson draws word-pictures with his exquisite expressions and phrases. His poetry is most musical. This poem, if properly read, should give great delight, for the sound of words echoes the sense in a remarkable manner. The slow and rapid movement of the brook, the huddling flow of its water with the murmuring and

gurgling sounds that are thus produced, its journey through various places and through several obstacles, with the flickering effect of sun and moon beams on the surface of its water, and its final fall into the river—all these are beautifully portrayed in the simple, yet effective lines of the poem. The “haunting melody” of Tennyson’s poems and the “jewelled and polished perfection of his verse” cannot but be felt and appreciated by a careful student. The poem is supposed to be an autobiography of a brook.

1. **coot and hern** : lake birds.
7. **thorps** : villages.
14. **sharps and trebles** : notes of music.
15. **eddying** : whirling.
17. **fret** : wear away.
- 19-20. **set with** : covered with.
27. **lusty** : large and full of life.
- 27-28. **trout and grayling** : fish.
38. **covers** : copses.
41. **gloom** : grow dark.
glance : shine.
43. **the netted sunbeam** : the chequered light and shade of moving water are like the meshes and threads of a net.
46. **brambly wildernesses** : wild places full of thorns.
47. **shingly bars** : pebbles and sand that obstruct the flow of the brook.

(*Note* :—This poem should lend itself well to good recitation. Note the various figures of speech, specially alliteration and musical grouping of words like “babbles on the pebbles.”)

SWEET AUBURN

(From “ The Deserted Village.”)

Oliver Goldsmith was a poet and writer for young and old alike, and his prose works and his poems are widely and very appreciatively read. He is considered to be one of the most charming of the descriptive poets in English.

This extract forms the first part of the long poem called “ The Deserted Village ”, in which Goldsmith describes the departed charm and fascination of the village Auburn, which now is “ deserted ” or uninhabited. The life of the village-folk, their simple delights and occupations and their desires and habits in the good old days are beautifully portrayed. The whole poem deserves a careful perusal for the sheer delight that it is bound to afford to the reader.

1. **Auburn** : a name coined by Goldsmith ; believed to be the village named Lissoy, the home of the poet’s boyhood.
2. **swain** : peasant.
3. **smiling** : beautiful ; pleasing.
4. **delayed** : stayed on ; lingered.
5. **ease** : freedom from care.
6. **seats of my youth** : Goldsmith had in mind the environments of his early Irish home.
7. **thy green** : the village common, or the plot of open land where all assembled.
14. **talking age** : talkative old people.
17. **train** : the inhabitants of the village.
18. **led up** : carried on.
19. **circled** : went round.

20. **contending** : competing.
25. **simply** : in their simplicity.
26. **holding out** : continuing to dance.
27. **mistrustless** : unsuspecting.
smutted : blackened.
29. **side-long looks** : stolen glances.

AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT

This is a pathetic poem, well worth reading over and over again, for the repetitions in it produce a pleasing musical effect and enhance the beauty of the piece.

A farmer couple, husband and wife, quarrelled over some trivial matter. Each wore a sullen face, until both arrived at the grave of their dead child. They felt deeply touched and forgetting their quarrel, they kissed each other affectionately.

3. **fell out** : quarrelled.
5. **kiss'd again with tears** : made up the quarrel with tears and kisses.
7. **all the more endears** : increases the affection.

SAD STORY OF A MOTOR FAN

Young Ethelred was a "motor fan," which means one passionately fond of everything connected with motor cars. This boy filled his head completely with ideas of motor cars, so much so that in his behaviour, his movements, his talk, he began to imitate a car. He called himself a "Packford Eight"—after the names of popular makes of motor cars. In his mad desire to perfect his resemblance to a car, he once drank petrol—and died.

(*Note* :—To appreciate the humour of this poem, you should acquire some elementary knowledge of motor cars.)

4. **craze** : an intense desire ; a passion.
19. **make** : model.
21. **M. P. G.** : miles per gallon (petrol consumption of a car.)
22. **M. P. H.** : miles per hour (speed).
- £. S. D.** : pounds, shillings, pence ; (price).
23. **gears** : machinery to regulate the speed.
40. **radiator** : a place in front of the engine where water is put to keep the engine cool.
45. **Head** : headmaster.
53. **tum** : stomach.

SIX AND OUT

In this poem the children's street game forms the basis of a humorous skit on cricket. These children, having got hold of a bat and a ball, spend their evenings, bowling, batting, hitting and scoring—and breaking the glass doors and windows of the neighbouring shops and houses. They play their cricket in all seriousness, making merry—until a policeman arrives and they run away.

'Pitch', 'crease', 'bowlers', 'hit', 'wicket', 'scorer', 'umpire', 'drive'—all these are technical terms used in cricket.

12. **M. C. C.** : Marylebone Cricket Club, the governing body of English cricket.
19. **the screen** : a white movable structure, placed on the boundary of a cricket pitch in line with the wicket. Its purpose is to provide a background against which the flight of the ball can be easily followed.
24. **The law's majestic tread** : the dignified walk of a policeman.

AND HIS DAY'S WORK WAS DONE

This is another humorous poem, describing the imaginary end of some men who were over-enthusiastic, but indiscreet. A fast motorist, a stupid marker, a simple-minded animal feeder in a circus, a hefty fellow, a fool-hardy cultivator, an idiotic sailor—all meet their death suddenly, or “finish with a jerk,” as the poet puts it humorously.

- 11. **dray** : a low cart on heavy wheels.
- 13. **shooting competition** : a target shooting practice.
- 15. **marker** : one who marks the points or score at games.
- 16. **puff** : pride ; conceit.
- 26. **menagerie** : a collection of wild animals kept for exhibition.
- 52. **barmy bull** : an angry bull emitting froth from his nostrils.
- 64. **aloft** : on high.
- 65. **funked** : was afraid, out of cowardice.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

A poet sometimes teaches a valuable moral lesson through a simple story. Here is such a poem.

Off the east coast of Scotland there was a dangerous rock called the Inchcape Rock. The Abbot of Aberbrothok had great compassion for sailors, and in order to help them he had a bell fixed near the Rock so that ships might be warned of the danger. The bell was fastened to a rope so that it hung in the water not far from the surface. At the top end of the rope was a float consisting of a big piece of wood ; at the other end was an anchor, which kept the bell fixed in one place. When the waves rose and fell, especially in a storm, the bell rang. One day, however, a pirate, Sir Ralph the Rover, out of sheer mischief, cut the bell

from the Inchcape float and was very pleased at his wicked deed. But the ways of Providence are inscrutable. After several days, his own ship was wrecked at the very same place, as in the absence of the bell he could not be warned of the submerged rock.

- 4. **keel** : the timber at the bottom of a ship giving it support.
- 11. **buoy** : a floating object fixed at a certain place to indicate the position of hidden rocks, etc.
- 13. **surges' swell** : high rising waves.
- 32. **plague the priest** : cause trouble and worry to the good Abbot.
- 42. **scoured the seas** : Sir Ralph being a pirate, his business was to plunder and destroy the ships he met at sea.
- 45. **haze** : mist.
- 58. **wind hath fallen** : there is a drop in the wind ; the atmosphere is calm.
- 68. **The Devil.....knell** : He heard one fearful sound and it appeared to him that the evil spirits at the bottom of the sea were ringing his death knell with the same bell which he had cut off.

ORPHEUS

This is a song from Shakespeare's play, King Henry VIII.
(Act III, Scene I.)

The charm and the potency of music are applauded herein.

Orpheus : In Greek mythology he is believed to be the greatest musician. He had a lyre given to him by Apollo and played upon it so exquisitely that all things inanimate as well as animate were charmed.

- 5. **as** : as if.
- 8. **billows** : waves.
- 10. **art** : charm.

BREATHES THERE THE MAN

In this delightful piece, Scott ardently applauds and glorifies the feeling of patriotism that every human breast should cherish. Any person devoid of love for his country is a wretch. He may have all worldly honours, but he can claim no popular respect or affection, and he dies an ignoble death.

1-6. The first six lines contain what is called a rhetorical question, the answer to which is self-evident.

8. **no minstrel raptures swell** : no poet will sing his praises.

11. **despite** : in spite of.

power and pelf : authority and wealth.

12. **concentred all in self** : thinking of his own self to the exclusion of others, specially of his country.

FOR ALL WE HAVE AND ARE

Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay on December 30, 1865. After his education in England he came back to India in 1882, and took up literary and journalistic work, which gave him a wide knowledge of Anglo-Indian and Indian life. He worked on the editorial staff of the *The Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, and *The Pioneer*, then of Allahabad.

This poem was written in 1914, the year in which the Great War was started. The poem seeks to inspire Englishmen to fight manfully for the sake of a righteous cause and to defend their country.

The poem became very popular during the war on account of the clarion call to duty and sacrifice that it embodies, and the cheerful spirit of hope and optimism that it breathes.

Read it carefully several times and let its own beauty sink into your mind—of its own weight.

- 4. **The Hun** : the Germans.
- 14. **sickened** : troubled.
- 23. **shrivelled** : contracted.

IF—

This is a reflective poem and requires close study. The central idea of the poem is, however, easy to grasp. The poet simply says that if you cultivate certain habits and acquire certain qualities, “Yours is the earth and everything that’s in it,” and “You will be a man” in the real sense of the word.

Now what are these qualities ? It will pay you to prepare a careful analysis of the poem yourself.

- 6. If others circulate lies about you, you should refrain from telling lies in your turn.

- 11-12. It is of interest to know that these two lines are inscribed above one of the entrance gates to the famous Tennis Courts of Wimbledon, near London.

Why do you think this passage was selected for such a place ?

- 14. **twisted** : distorted.
- 15. **broken** : destroyed ; frustrated.
- 18. **pitch-and-toss** : A game of chance.

(*Note* :—Which passage from this poem would you select to place above the entrance door of a school ?)

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